



Helping People Help Themselves

SPARE CHANGE

NEWS

April 8 – April 21, 2011

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PHOTO / REUTERS PHIL MCCARTEN

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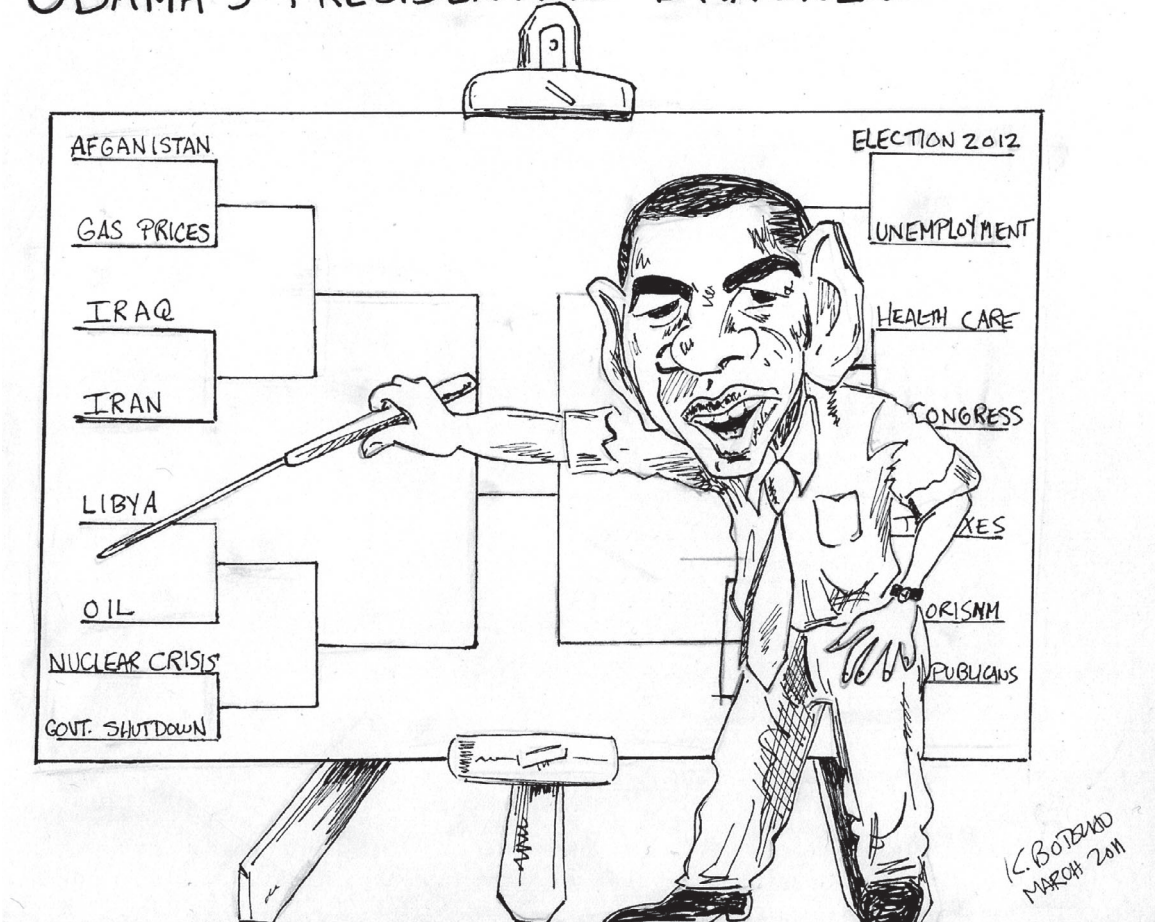
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Spare Change News

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<p><i>Spare Change News</i> 1151 Massachusetts Ave. Cambridge, MA 02138 Phone: 617-497-1595 Fax: 617-868-0767 E-mail: editor@sparechangenews.net director@sparechangenews.net Website: www.sparechangenews.net</p>	<p>Editor in Chief Adam Sennott</p> <p>Poetry Editor Marc D. Goldfinger</p> <p>Graphic Designer Brendan Bernard</p> <p>Puzzle Editor Samuel Weems</p> <p>Editorial Assistants Alison Clark Chalkey Horenstein Lorraine N. Tashjian</p> <p>Contributing Writers Wild Bill Liam Cunningham Jacques Fleury Marc D. Goldfinger Carolyn Gregory Kevin Hollett Aaron James Shay Kelley Reah Medenilla Christopher Mesfin Danielle Olsen James Shearer Robert Sondak</p> <p>Vendor Supervisors Algia Benjamin Gary Gilreath Christopher Mesfin Charles Stallings Reggie Wynn</p> <p>Advertising Representative Debbie Clarke</p> <p>Contributing Photographers Richard Howard Shay Kelley</p>
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OBAMA'S PRESIDENTIAL BRACKET



Worldwide Vendor Spotlight:
Emily Villamor

Chris' Quote Corner

Accept the difficulties and challenges of life. Work hard at everything you do. And if you fail try again.
- Hal Urban, Life's Greatest lessons

There is always a treasure in the problems and difficulties you face in life. When problems arise, ask yourself what is the message in this situation that I am facing? Why am I going through this problem? What am I learning? Problems arise to ultimately make you a stronger person. When you work hard to solve the problems you face in life, solving the problems build your character for the better. See your trials as an opportunity for growth and learning, and welcome them everyday so that you can conquer your problems swiftly.

Christopher Mesfin
Spare Change News

Vision & Mission

Spare Change News was founded in 1992 by a group of homeless people and a member of Boston Jobs with Peace. Spare Change is published by the nonprofit organization The Homeless Empowerment Project (HEP).

SPARE CHANGE'S GOAL:

"To present, by our own example, that homeless and economically disadvantaged people, with the proper resources, empowerment, opportunity, and encouragement are capable of creating change for ourselves in society."

HEP'S OBJECTIVES:

To empower the economically disadvantaged in Greater Boston through self-employment, skill development and self-expression. To create forums, including those of independent media in order to reshape public perception of poverty and homelessness.

Reah Medenilla
The Jeepney (Philippines)

When street paper vendor Emily Villamor first started to sell The Jeepney, in the Philippines, she was hoping for some changes but she never imagined it would completely turn her life around. While selling the magazine, Emily met a national TV celebrity who offered her not only friendship but also a new set of teeth.

"I now love to smile. Eating is more enjoyable. I don't stammer anymore. All thanks to a Jeepney magazine customer who gave me some money as a gift so I could have teeth.

I recognized her the first time I saw her. I said, "Hello, Jeanette Torres. You are the child from Anna Liza that I used to watch on TV. You're my idol!" She was surprised that I still recognized her. I introduced myself and told her about the Jeepney magazine. She did not buy one that day but promised to come back. She kept her word. When she came back she bought three magazines and gave me one thousand pesos. She said I could keep the change. She also brought me clothes and chocolates for my grandchildren. We have since become friends.

Selling the Jeepney magazine has made my family's life better. I am able to pay the rent and provide for my family. I have bought many things for our home. I am able to help my son and my grandchildren. I am saving up for my grandchild's birthday, which is coming up. My husband also wants a watch.

My dream is to own a house. It is not easy to rent, but I don't ever want to go back to the streets.



I have been selling the Jeepney magazine since the first issue was published in 2008. I sell the magazine in events, in universities, and in malls. It's really a great privilege to be a Jeepney partner because I get to work in big malls, communicate with foreigners, and meet people from all walks of life.

I used to sell brooms on the streets while my husband was a barker (a person who calls out passengers for jeepneys - the Philippines' public transport). Most of the time we were not able to earn enough money so we would sleep on the streets to save on fares, as we lived far from where we worked. As we spent days and months on the streets, we met other street people who became our friends. They invited us to a Drop-in Center for street people. It was there that I first heard that there was work for street people selling the Jeepney magazine.

I hope that more people will support and buy the Jeepney magazine. This is helping me to change my family's life."

© www.streetnewsservice.org

Patrick’s Budget Proposal Outlines New Approach to Ending Homelessness

Liam Cunningham
Spare Change News

With his new budget proposal, Deval Patrick has decided to take a new approach to ending homelessness.

The new proposal was filed on January 26th and will reform the emergency shelter system and work to transition to a housing first approach. The proposal aims to cut the state’s budget by 570 million, approximately 1.8 %, and is one of the biggest budget cuts of the past twenty years. One program which will see funding cuts is the emergency shelter program for homeless families.

While the governor is proposing cuts in the emergency assistance program, he is also increasing funding for alternative programs that aim to place families in housing rather than shelters.

According to the administrations website, “The governor’s fiscal year 2012 budget recommendation reforms the Commonwealth’s emergency shelter program for families. The reform will reduce the state’s reliance on shelter and move towards a system with a housing first approach that will provide greater opportunity for self sufficiency while using resources more efficiently.”

While nearly everyone involved with the issue of homelessness believes it is better to place homeless families in housing before shelters, many are worried that the language in the new budget proposal will eliminate the shelter safety net; leaving many homeless families out on the street.

Ruth Bourquin has worked in the Benefits department at the Massachusetts Law Reform Institute since 1989. The MLRI is a statewide legal advocacy support center. According to their website, their mission is “to provide economic, racial, and social justice for low income people through legal action, education, and advocacy.” Bourquin and those at MLRI are in support of transitioning to a housing first approach.

“In general, we all think that having families in housing is better than having families in shelters. So we support the creation of the new line item, and the continued emphasis and effort to move families into housing as soon as possible,” said Bourquin.

The new line item Bourquin is referring to proposes to transfer around \$38 million dollars of funding from the Emergency Assistance line item into



a new account. This new account will offer short term housing assistance to families experiencing homelessness with the goal of placing them in apartments instead of shelters. While Bourquin and MLRI support this aspect of the budget proposal, they also feel it has several inherent flaws.

“The first very troubling thing is that the language in the emergency assistance line item would limit access to shelters to only three very narrow categories of people,” said Bourquin.

The reformed Emergency assistance system would prioritize three groups of people to be eligible for shelter: families who are at risk of domestic abuse, families whose homes have been destroyed by a natural disaster, and families who have a head of household 21 years old or younger. Bourquin believes this narrow categorization of people will leave many families without options.

“Under the administration’s own estimates, which we actually believe are low, more than 60 % of the families with children who are now eligible for shelter would become ineligible under their

proposal.”

Bourquin also worries that, under the new proposal, families with children who receive any aid through either of the proposed line items would not be allowed to receive further assistance for 24 months, regardless of how helpless they are. Furthermore, she anticipates that the new proposal will effectively eliminate the shelter safety system for families with nowhere to go, or families in the process of being placed in housing, which takes time.

“We need to retain access to shelter for families who need a place to stay while they are looking for housing,” said Bourquin. “Even with a real subsidy, like a federal section 8, people are given a few months to find an apartment, because the program recognizes that giving someone a subsidy is not the same as giving them housing. It takes time to go through the process of housing a family, and in the meantime, they need a place to say.”

Bourquin feels that these new alternative programs being implemented by the administration need to prove their

effectiveness in housing people before the shelter system is drastically altered.

“We just think it is incredibly premature to say we are ready to take down the shelter safety net when the state has not yet proven that it can house all of these families.”

Bourquin and those at the MLRI are not alone in thinking that the new proposal will be putting homeless families at risk. Kelly Turley is the Director of Legislative Advocacy at the Massachusetts Coalition for the Homeless, located in Lynn, Massachusetts. The coalition is a statewide public policy and direct service organization.

“In the House 1 proposal, there are many key elements we support, but [we] have very strong reservations about other elements. We support strengthening the housing based response system but are concerned that the proposal would eliminate the shelter safety net for families who are looking for access to shelter while they seek affordable housing,” said Turley.

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Crittenton Women's Union: A Path to Economic Self-sufficiency

Robert Sondak
Spare Change News

They help 1,300 people a year and run one of the largest emergency and transitional housing programs in the state, serving 350 families a year.

The Crittenton Women's Union is a Boston-based non-profit organization that combines a mission of direct service programs, independent research and public advocacy to help low-income women attain economic independence. CWU was formed after a 2006 merger of Crittenton's Educational Union and the Women's Educational Union. The organization serves a total client population of 2,500 to 3,000 women with children through its housing, education, and training programs, and its family support services.

According to their website, live-workthrive.org, the CWU facilitates five direct service programs for low-income women. The Career Family Opportunity program is the first of its kind, helping single parents build the foundation necessary to achieve economic independence. This program offers mentoring, peer support groups, cash incentives, counseling and skills training. CWU also has a GED program which provides secondary level education and includes life skills, work skills and computer training. The Emergency and Transitional Housing program includes shelter facilities and transitional housing for homeless mothers and children. The Boston Neighborhood Healthy Families is a home-based program that provides first-time parents under 21 years old with education, parenting and life skills

to prevent child abuse and neglect.

"Each program provides different services and serves different groups, so demand varies," said Stephanie Nichols, director of communications for CWU. "Our GED program serves mainly young people 16 years and older, as does our Healthy Families program for first-time parents 21 years or younger. Our Woman to Woman career development course offers computer training, job readiness preparation, and college and career counseling to all ages.

"We launched the Economic Mobility Institute, which includes a menu of trainings, in the fall, and we expanded the class offerings in the spring. CFO Boston is at its capacity of 26 with a seven-person waiting list. CFO Cambridge is halfway to being filled."

CWU also conducts research into the economic, political and social barriers facing disadvantaged women. It translates this research into web-based tools for low-income families to use. One of the CWU web tools is the Economic Independence Calculator. Using this calculator, families can determine how much it would cost to live in individual cities and towns in Massachusetts. Another web tool offered by CWU is Hot Jobs for Women. This tool helps users locate careers which require two years or less of higher education or training. Hot Jobs also chooses careers that would provide the level of income needed by a single parent with two children, based on the Massachusetts Economic Independence Index. CWU has also established an advocacy council, a network and a blog to help

SONADAK continued on next page

Project 50/50: A Girl in Florida

Story and Photo by Shay Kelley
Spare Change News

"You ain't goin no where!" she said as she squinted her brown eyes in my direction. I laughed. "What do you mean? I'm goin lots of places," I replied. "Nope! You're not goin anywhere, you're gonna stay and play," she demanded through a mouthful of little candies called Nerds. They had turned her fingers a rainbow of colors and it seemed to fit her personality.

When I had left Tybee Island a few days before, I knew that the Project had absorbed some focus. I had written in my journal that "I see God in random acts of Love between people and the beauty of nature," and when I arrived in Jacksonville, it was all I wanted from the city. I was living "love hungry" and I drove downtown determined to find Love, see Love, watch Love or feel it within some random encounter. Now I was sitting in the park, cornered by a demanding 3 year old with an attitude.



"What's that?" she was asking me as she pointed at the camera around my neck. "A camera," I said. "It takes pictures..."

Her sticky fingers were already wrapped around the lens, moving the camera up and down as she peered

inside the black hole, examining the light that reflects from the glass. I grimaced as I thought of her candy coated fingerprints on the most valuable possession I have left. I pressed the shutter while her eye was a millimeter from the lens. She heard the click, and her braids

bounced around her forehead as she glared at me with an eyebrow raised. "What was that?" she asked. I used the momentary distraction to move the camera up to my eye and snap another photo. "It's your picture," I said as I turned the camera and showed her the face of a 3 year old with attitude problem.

This may have been a bad idea, I thought as I watched the little girl grab for the camera with an expression that warned of an impending tantrum when I moved it out of her reach. "Me! Mine! I wanna do it!"

I looked up at her family. A few moments ago, this little girl was following me down the sidewalk as though we were both simply heading to the same place. "Brionna, get back here!" was all I had heard as I walked the girl back toward the line of adults on the sidewalk. When she was back at the end of the line, no one seemed to notice that I didn't leave, even when I stayed to sit

KELLEY continued on next page

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inform and educate policy makers, community leaders and women at risk. The Emergency and Transitional Housing and the Career Family Opportunity programs are just two examples of the CWU direct service programs that have grown in numbers and received public praise for helping families since the 2006 merger.

“CWU has a capacity to house 135 families at one time, however, and cannot accommodate more than that,” said Nichols. “We serve a total of about 350 families a year. We work closely with our families to move them into permanent housing and, once permanently housed, we continue to provide them with support services to help them stabilize their lives and work towards economic self-sufficiency.

“We cannot accommodate more than these numbers. We are operating at full capacity.”

The Massachusetts Coalition for the Homeless recently released statistics gathered from the Department of Housing and Community Development. These statistics showed that as of March 2011, there were 3,300 homeless families in the state assistance program, compared to 2,000 in March 2008. This represents a staggering 50 percent increase.

With the goal of helping single-parent low-income families attain economic independence, the Career Family Opportunity program opened in South Boston on November 10, 2009. This was the first program of its kind in Massachusetts, offering family support services, education and life skills training. This program has grown from a core group of 17 families to 26 families as of 2011.

One year following the opening of CFO Boston, CWU teamed up with the Cambridge Housing Authority to bring the CFO program to Cambridge. The



Rep. Alice K. Wolf (D-Cambridge), State Representative and Cambridge Councilman Timothy J. Toomey, Jr., (front row, 1st and 2nd from left) and Gregory P. Russ, executive director of the Cambridge Housing Authority, (back row, center), along with state officials and Crittenton Women's Union (CWU) staff and program participants, celebrate the opening last October of Career Family Opportunity Cambridge, a groundbreaking program designed by CWU to help low-income families achieve economic self-sufficiency within five years. (10/7/2010)

Cambridge Housing Authority was looking for a partner to implement the HUD Moving to Work program, which gives low-income families incentives to participate in job training and education, then assists them in obtaining employment and becoming self-sufficient. CWU was a good choice, due to their program experience and familiarity with HUD initiatives.

“Cambridge Housing Authority participates in the Moving to Work program of the US Department of Housing and Urban Development,” said Nichols. “Moving to Work provides funding to designated housing authorities across the country to devel-

op programs that will help people become economically self-sufficient and no longer need public housing subsidies. CHA was looking to create partnerships for this kind of programming and learned about the CFO program in Boston.

“Cambridge has no waiting list,” said Nichols. “They are only half way to being filled.”

Mayor David Maher commented in an October 2010 CWU press release that CHA partnering with CWU is an example of the non-profit sector joining forces with local government for the good of their constituents, and that real people benefit from the results.

CFO Boston statistics released by CWU for 2009 and 2010 show positive results for its members. CFO members are breaking the cycle and working towards self-sufficiency, with 80 to 90 percent entering into continuing education and 60 percent working on finishing high school. These two goals are small but important stepping stones toward attaining a job and becoming self-sufficient.

Robert Sondak is a Spare Change News vendor and staff writer. Robert has a Bachelors Degree from the University of Massachusetts Boston, College of Public and Community Service (CPCS). Robert also minored in Urban Planning and Advocacy.

KELLEY *continued from previous*

with her. I wondered how long it would take before someone heard her screaming about a camera and told me to go away.

“Brionna! Leave that girl alone,” one of the women said with an apologetic glance in my direction. Brionna stopped reaching for the camera long enough to look over her shoulder and offer a dirty look. “But I want it!” she justified.

I didn’t want to leave yet, so I offered a distraction. “Do you want to play?” I asked her as I pulled my legs under me to sit Indian style on the rocky pavement. As soon as I created the seat, Brionna was sitting in my lap and forcefully nodding her head up and down.

“Play!” she said. I aimed the camera at both of us and pressed the little silver button.

The woman watched from the other side of the camera as the picture was created, and her expression was impressed with the result. She reached over to the man on her right and tapped him on the leg. He turned from a conversation with a teenage boy to raise an irritated eyebrow in her direction. She pointed at my camera. “Who are you?” he asked me as he noticed me for the first time. “I’m Shay,” I nodded at him. “Nice to meet you.”

“You take pictures?” he asked, and I explained, “I photograph what I see.”

He nodded toward the little girl and

returned my smile. “She’s a firecracker isn’t she? Who does she look like?” he asked as he waived his hands toward the three women sitting on the sidewalk. I looked from one lady to the next, and made my choice. Brionna’s mother was mostly ignoring the game, with only a small smile on her lips at the mention of a resemblance. “Like twins!” the man said before returning his attention to his friend.

Brionna pressed the silver button on my camera one more time before swiftly standing up from my lap and gripping the camera strap with her sticky fingers. Her mother smiled in our direction, and before I could blink, Brionna was holding my camera and pointing it at her

mother.

For an instant I was gripped with the fear of my camera falling from the hands of a toddler onto the concrete pavement, but she giggled and immediately handed it back. She smiled at me as she sat back down in my lap, and before she shoved another handful of rainbow colored candy in her mouth she mumbled in my direction. “You aint goin no where.”

As I walked away from the park, I wondered how many pieces of myself I would leave in the hands of strangers across the country. I flipped back through the pictures on the camera and I saw Love—in a picture taken by a 3 year old with an attitude.

Sober For Myself and No One Else

I thought the drug use would end in post-detox. After all, this was a 'post' program. I naïvely believed that the folks in post detox would want to be sober since it was a program you attended coming out of detox and was opened only to clients willing to sign themselves in.

Aaron James
Spare Change News



It's been awhile since I have continued with my adventure in post detox Danvers. I left off after my first conversation with Lindsay, my case worker. To sum up

briefly, she told me AA was not necessarily right for everyone and maybe I did not need AA to stay sober. She explained that I had two sides to my thought process, addictive and rational, and it was on me to decide which voice I listened to. I ended my first full day at Danvers convinced I would not complete the ten day program. I was going to leave on Saturday, six days after I arrived. I was ready to move on.

Between that Tuesday conversation with Lindsay and Saturday, I grew a lot. In order to 'stay' sober I had to come to fully believe, for myself, that this was about and for only me. Drugs and alcohol are everywhere and the halls of post detox are no exception. In Massachusetts, detoxes are extremely accessible, almost to a fault I would argue. Many folks use the services to clean up for a couple of days then go right back out to using once fed, medicated, and feeling better. It is an endless cycle that the liberal government of Massachusetts allows to continue. At Bourne wood (my first detox) drugs were prevalent, some prescribed from the hospital and others hustled in by visitors.

I thought the drug use would end in post-detox. After all, this was a 'post' program. I naïvely believed that the folks in post detox would want to be sober since it was a program you attended coming out of detox and was opened only to clients willing to sign themselves in. I learned that, while it was a completely volunteer program, there were still many reasons for some folks to attend other than to get sober. One gentlemen just wanted his kids back and according to the courts, while not mandated to stay out of jail, a completion of the program would get him visitation rights. Another young lady wanted Mom and Dad's support again. While renewed trust from my parents was important for me as well, it was not the reason I was there (and I don't have any kids).

The drug use at Danvers was even more prevalent than at Bournewood! After getting friendly with one kid at the program, on Thursday he eventually told me he had snuck several oxy's in, and then he asked if I wanted a line. It was a breaking point. Up until at that point my natural reaction

would have been 'Hell yes!' And I literally felt my brain forming the questions to ask: where are we going to do it, how much money, how much do you have? I wanted a fix so bad by that Thursday. However, the first real miracle of my sobriety happened as I politely declined. It was as if someone was controlling my words when I said, 'No thank you.'

That night, I was sick to my stomach. I was not special by any means. The offer for a line was passed on to other non-sketchy patients. The following day the staff felt something was array. They issued us all drug tests and three of the patients were kicked out. Had I given in I do not believe I would be here today, still sober. If anything, I learned a great deal about how to focus on myself. As far as I am concerned, this is the most important element to stay within your means. You simply cannot base your actions on other people's decisions. The act to snort a line would have only proven that I needed help, which was obvious given the fact that I was there. I mean what more did I have to prove to anyone. I am an addict trying to get help, addicts drink and use drugs. I was trying to break that cycle regardless of what others were trying to do.

Seeing other people high while I was trying to get better was very difficult, and only led to enforce my decision to leave Saturday. In fact, one of my roommates who also knew about the oxy's decided to leave the program in fear of his own sobriety. It made sense to leave if you could not stay sober around drugs. I did not think I could either, so my exit early on Saturday seemed like the correct decision regardless of what my parents thought.

On Friday I had another conversation with Lindsay. I explained I did not feel safe and was going to leave the following day. She explained that she knew drugs were on the unit and gave me a drug test. She then told me that the kid who mentioned the fact that drugs were on the unit failed to mention any names. I told her that I had no clue, and that I was just trying to focus on myself.

Lindsay went on, "I am not asking you to rat on anyone, Aaron, that would make you even more unsafe. However, I really hope this drug test is going to be clean."

"It will be."

"What I want to know is, why are you leaving tomorrow?"

"I want to move on."

"I get that, but..."

"I can't have visitor's and I miss my girl so bad."

"How about this: if I arrange something with the program manager, make the visit

with your girl beneficial to your recovery and have her visit on Sunday, will you stick it out to Wednesday?"

This seemed fair to me. At the end of the day, the drugs would be gone and I could see my girlfriend. That afternoon a meeting with her on Sunday was arranged. I changed my decision, I would stick it out the full ten days.

Not taking the oxy that Thursday night made me stronger. I never turned down such an offer in my life and it felt great to do so. Yes, I am a negotiator and I negotiated a visit with my girlfriend. While visits were rarely welcomed, I got one! It was the reason I agreed to complete the program. Seeing my girlfriend was a compromise for me to stay the full ten days.

I was anxious for Sunday. I missed her so much and was really looking forward to seeing her. I turned down drugs for the first time in my life and was on track to complete the program! I had learned about focusing on me. Alcohol is everywhere. If I wanted to make it in the real world I had to be able to accept the fact that others drink and I cannot. Looking back over the last eight months I feel like everyone drinks but me, even those who are supposedly trying to get sober. I have met many folks who are kicking heroine but still drink. This is why I stress our individual paths. And while I often look down on heroine addicts drinking I cannot let it lead me to drink. I understand the progression of the disease and that nine times out of ten heroine addicts who pick up drinking again will eventually see another needle in their arms. While this is very depressing, I cannot let it affect me. This is the most important factor to my sobriety. The oxy's on the unit was the first real test for me before I left. I passed the exam! In the months ahead I would pass several such tests.

Sunday came around very slowly. Our scheduled meeting was for three o'clock. My girlfriend arrived, but then nurse informed me, "However Lindsay, does not arrive till four and she needs to be here for the meeting. The visit was never documented."

"So she has to wait an hour?" I asked.

"I am afraid so." She explained.

An hour went by when finally Lindsay arrived. Another half hour went by before she brought me into her office. At this point I was very upset. Lindsay sat me down, "The program manger never signed off on the meeting." She explained.

"So?"

"She cannot meet you today." She said.

FULL MOON

-Carolyn Gregory

Time grows more ancient
as the world rotates
among the planets,
listens more intently
at the hour of sleep
or when music strums a lute
I watch the Crow moon,
big as a cracked platter
in March
bending close to hear
sad tales of drowning
and broken trees,
the silent angels guarding those
who still believe in compassion

My Scorn

By Wild Bill © 2010

Dark descends upon this lost prospect
Stole by thieves of chance, a golden day is spent
Who bares the weight of loss and irresponsible neglect
Mother Nature my scorn offers but a moment lent
She gives to me then withholds those times I cherish
With mirth upon her tainted breath she smiles
Tossed and lost under foot and boot I perish
On dark asphalt soaked, misplaced fo r m iles
Freedom gone to her saccharine score
I ply the time with mournful soul
Take what’s proffered wishing more
Take her dice and stoutly role

Spare Change News Views

by Marc D. Goldfinger

The gold is illusion; the rainbow is real
The love in your heart nobody can steal
So in your striving, always reach for the height
Open heart and mind and dwell in the light
The more that you share, the larger your gain
Release your soul and ease someone’s pain
We all make the difference; I know this is true
So see through your eyes; your eyes looking at you.

PHOTO / JANINE CALLEN



Poems may be submitted to: Marc D. Goldfinger,
76 Unity Ave. Belmont MA, 02478

or email: sparechangepoetry@gmail.com. SCN cannot return poetry
submissions, and authors will be contacted only if their poems are published.

Every Thursday
Squawk Coffeehouse, 9 pm
1555 Mass Ave., Cambridge
Open mike for poets and musicians.

Every Saturday
Out of the Blue Gallery, 8 pm
106 Prospect St., Cambridge
\$3-5 suggested donation.
671- 354-5287

Every Sunday
Lizard Lounge Poetry Slam, 7 pm
1667 Mass. Ave., Cambridge
\$5. 671- 547-0759

Every Monday
Out of the Blue Gallery, 8 pm
106 Prospect St., Cambridge
\$4 suggested donation.
617-354-5287

Every Wednesday
Boston Poetry Slam, 8 pm
Cantab Lounge, 738 Mass. Ave.,
Cambridge
\$3. 21+. 617-354-2685

Second Thursday of Every Month
Tapestry of Voices, 6:30 pm
Borders, 10 School St., Boston
Free. 617-557-7188

Second Tuesday of Every Month
Newton Free Library, 7 pm
330 Homer St. 617-796-1360

Third Saturday of Every Month
Boston Haiku Society meeting,
2-6 pm
Kaji Aso Studio,
40 St. Stephen St., Boston
\$3. 617-247-1719

*Poetry event listings may be
submitted to
sceditor@homelessempowerment.org*

Exclusive Interview with Actress Sophia Bush

Danielle Olsen
Spare Change News

When you hear Sophia Bush you may think of the actress from long running television show *One Tree Hill*, where she has portrayed character Brooke Davis for the past eight years. Yet Bush has done much more than act; along with being an icon for women's rights and fighting for healthy body images in young girls, Bush has dedicated her life to helping the environment. Growing up in California, Bush says, the love of nature was always inside her. Bush has used her stardom to bring attention to, among other things, the oil spill in the Gulf of Mexico and the lack of clean drinking water around the world. Recently Sophia Bush took time out of her busy schedule to talk with Spare Change about some of the issues she is passionate about.

DANIELLE OLSEN: *Recently you put together a CD, Gasoline Rainbows, in which the proceeds will go to the clean-up efforts in the Gulf of Mexico. What was it like putting together that compilation?*

SOPHIA BUSH: We sort of had a revelation, like "Why do just one song? Why not do an album?" You see celebrity playlists on iTunes and you see how well soundtracks do when they're great. People love albums when they are filled with great artists. So we thought, why not make an album that benefits? It's so simple to distribute music digitally, there's no carbon footprint, we're not using any plastic, any paper. We're not creating any waste, we're just getting people great music and raising great money all the while. It was a really incredible experience and then to see all the bands who got so passionate about it. To have bands that don't need to give music away, like Black Eyed Peas and Vampire Weekend say, 'Oh, yeah, you can totally have songs,' and then to have Damien Rice give us an unreleased track, and to have City and Colour write us a song that is so haunting and so beautiful about what happened when the rig exploded — I mean, it's kind of an out of body experience to have it all happen. Before I forget, we're very, very lucky to have been able to partner with Dine Alone Records. None of us know anything about putting an album



together and Dine Alone was such an amazing champion for our cause and really just helped us make it happen. Without them I think we wouldn't have made it.

DANIELLE OLSEN: *You are not just involved in issues in the Gulf; what are some other foundations or causes you are passionate about?*

SOPHIA BUSH: Oh, god, you know, it's interesting because I think it all relates. I'm very passionate about what's going on with women's rights around the world, and once you start looking at statistics you start getting educated. You find that when women

are educated it impacts their communities, it impacts their children, it impacts their family, it impacts their environment. I think anyone who is concerned with the development of the world and protecting females should read Kristof's book, *Half the Sky*. It will absolutely blow your mind. I spend a lot of time looking at what's going on with women and also looking at what's going on with young people. I think I've had a really incredible year connecting with youth in America, and around the world, and really tried to start a movement getting kids encouraged to take care of their environment no matter where they are and to pay attention to what's going on

in their national politics, to the news, to take care of themselves and to be aware of what they're putting in their bodies. When you watch new things and you start researching factory farming it's just all interconnected. It seems so incredibly important when you're discussing what it is that we are putting in our bodies and putting into our environment. With our food industries, water is so crucial and important and it's been really wonderful to do some work with Charity Water and you take it for granted living in the US, being able to get clean water out of your tap at any moment, any day, and there are people around the world who have to walk miles and miles at risk of physical harm and death just to get water that isn't even clean to begin with. So I think it's a really eye-opening process when you start to look at the world around you and take your blinders off.

DANIELLE OLSEN: *Do you have any plans to get involved in aiding Japan?*

SOPHIA BUSH: I've been doing a lot of tweeting and sending out every donation link that I can find. We've all been donating to the Red Cross and I think it's just going to be incredibly important. It's very simple, very easy rather, when the sort of initial shock of something like this wanes for people to not stay involved but it's going to take some time as that country starts to get itself back together to even see what they need. I think it's incredibly important to stay active and to stay on top of it because, maybe, I don't know if it's going to be a food drive. I don't know if it's going to be donations. I don't know if it's going to be clothing drives. What is it going to be that we can do? I really think that we need to keep on top of the situation, and as we get information, continue donating and continue staying active and showing our support. They are really going to need it for a long time.

DANIELLE OLSEN: *You recently spoke out against a pro-anorexia Urban Outfitters t-shirt. As a woman and fashion icon many young girls look up to, why do you think it was so important for you to say something to your fans?*

SOHPIA BUSH: I think it's an abso-
continued on next page

lutely ludicrous idea that beauty only fits in one box. You look at history; look at who are our most beautiful, iconic women in the world and they're all different shapes and sizes and colors and heights. There is no one definition and yet I get that everyone, most everyone in the world, looks at Giselle and goes, 'Oh my god, she's so amazing.' There are also people who look at her and don't get it. So why her? There are people who love that body type but there are people who look at that body type and go, 'Eh,' and who look at a super curvy, short girl and go, 'That's what I like.' There is no one definition of beauty. You know the people that are the most beautiful, they have that quality — people say she has "it." The French say that it's 'je ne sais quoi,' — it's something special and it's confidence. It's a sort of ownership of self. It doesn't matter what measurement is around our thigh, it matters what you put out into the world. It matters how many times a day you smile; and are you good to the people in your life. Are you good to the people you work with; are you good to your family and your friends? Are you good to your community? Those are the things that make a person beautiful. So, yeah, I find it outrageous that a company that caters particularly to young women would say, 'Hey, eat less. You'll feel better about yourself.' Absolutely not.

DANIELLE OLSEN: *March was International Woman's Month; how far do you think women's rights have come?*

SOHPIA BUSH: I think in some areas we're doing a great job but I also think that we haven't come quite as far as we think we have when you still look at the difference between paychecks for men and women in the same field. People kind of roll their eyes and say, 'Oh, that's so feminist of you.' But I find it really irritating when guys are teasing their guy friends and they're saying, 'C'mon, man up, don't be a pussy.' It's like, really? It's a vulgar, pornographic term out there for a women's anatomy, and that's what you call a guy who isn't man enough? Why? Where did that come from? It seems like not a big deal at the end of the day; I hear it all the time and I understand that it's not. But when you really start to think about what the subtext of it means, it's interesting. I see it every day. I'm a woman who works at a job that is mostly populated by men. Most of the film set is made up of men and I watch the way that the people relate to each other, I watch the way that they make comments about women on the set and I work with lovely people and I pick up on things that I don't think are 100 percent awesome all the time. I

think it's important to really make sure that we're reinforcing, especially from a young age, respect for women. When you think that one of the most powerful things that men can do is put us down, that's obviously because we're incredibly powerful if we're built up. It's something we need to know and women need to own. If you're going to get called a bitch for standing up for yourself, for being educated, for having opinions and for using your voice, then fine, let them call you a bitch. If a man was doing any of those things he would be complimented and they'd say, 'Oh you know, he's really got balls, he's really strong, he's really assertive.' But a woman who's assertive immediately gets sort of categorized as difficult. I don't agree, I say go ahead, be loud, make them listen to you.

DANIELLE OLSEN: *Your character on One Tree Hill, fashion designer Brooke Davis started a campaign called 'Zero Is Not A Size.' Do you believe fashion such as this can have a positive impact on the world?*

SOPHIA BUSH: I do, and part of what I really appreciated about that, and part of the reason I still appreciate the message behind 'zero is not a size,' is that it doesn't make any sense. There's no universal size chart. I own clothes that are a range of sizes. It's like "Well, okay, this company has these sizes, that company has those sizes. Oh for this designer I can wear a sample but for that one I could never fit into a sample." It's like, "Well my body is not changing every time I put on a different dress, for sure. It's the way that they are cut." So what does it even mean? What does it mean to be a size zero? What does it mean to be a size four, a size ten? It doesn't mean anything. Again, I don't believe that beauty fits into one box and I don't think that it matters. I think that if you're healthy, if you take care of yourself and enjoy your life, that the number on the tag in your sweater should not be what defines you.

DANIELLE OLSEN: *On your blog you often talk about products that help to make a difference. What is your favorite that you've talked about that you think everyone should be using?*


SOPHIA BUSH: I think it's incredibly important to look at the little things in your home. People don't consider that the same water that goes down the sink when you do the dishes is the water that you filter, that then comes out of your faucet, that you're drinking. So think about it, what kind of detergent you use and what kind of dish soap are you using? What kind of chemicals are you pouring down the drain that then



have to be filtered in order for you to drink that water? How well are they really filtered? It's an important thing to look at. So for me, it's really about using eco-friendly, clean products in my house that don't make me nervous going down the drain. Again, really eliminating bottled water waste. I mean god, the amount of plastic they use that's totally unnecessary. Bottled water is not as regulated as tap water. So in thinking about all the things that could be in your tap, those are all the things that can be in your bottled water and they say it's from an exotic locale when it isn't. Why are you paying all this money? Why are you wasting all this plastic? It is part of the reason I blogged about the Water Bobble. I love the idea of that so very much. So often people say, 'Oh well you know I'm using my Brita at home and yes of course I'll drink tap water but if I have to go somewhere and use a water fountain, I don't know if that's filtered. I'll just go buy a bottle of water.' Well, take your filter with you. Take your filter, take your bottle and never use a plastic bottle again.

DANIELLE OLSEN: *Do you feel a duty to use your celebrity to spread word about important issues?*

SOPHIA BUSH: A duty? No. No, I mean, I think there are plenty of people who don't care to use their platforms. For me, it's just a no brainer. It's something I've always cared about, something that mattered to me and for a long time I didn't want to open up that box. You really don't know what's going to come out at you; it is a bit of a Pandora's box, this whole world of social media and personal exposure. Particularly when you do what I do, which is go to work and you play someone else every day. I wonder if I'm finally starting to put too much of myself out there — will people be able to believe the character that I play? I really believe that we can change things. I really believe that all our little voices can build up into something enormous and powerful and I just figure, "You know, screw it." I have to do this. It's in my heart and it's what matters to me more than my career. It is what matters to me more than anything.



Voices From The Streets

Voices from the Streets — a forum for those whose voices are too often ignored. From narratives to opinion to advice, these writers portray a unique perspective on life that might otherwise go unnoticed. Below, find that turning an ear towards those normally silenced opens the door to understanding and relating to those who have faced life on the street.

I Love No One But You

(Part One)

Marc D. Goldfinger
Spare Change News



“I love no one but you,
Darling don’t say that we’re
through
I can’t sleep at night
I dream with all of my might
That you’ll come into my heart
And we’ll never part.”-----hit

song by the Jesters in 1957.

We would sit, have coffee and smoke cigarettes after shooting heroin, and she would tell me tales about what it was like when she was a child. About the time that her father picked her up by her hair and slammed her into the refrigerator because she dropped a dish.

I was mesmerized by the story of her father chasing her across the pasture with the pitchfork because she was afraid to ride the new horse. She showed me her scars when she told me the story. Her mother was the same size as she was. When I met her mother she smiled at me and shook my hand. Just like her daughter, her eyes always looked sad.

Sascha was what everyone called her. Her real name was Alexandra. She loved her mother very much. Tears would fill her eyes as she talked about the times her father would beat her mother. I’m not sure if my parents ever really loved each other, but my father would never hit my mother. Never.

I had just returned from California. One year on parole. It went pretty fast, now that I think of it. I had worked most of the time in a group home for autistic teenagers.

Anyhow, I got back to New Hampshire and had been there only a few days. Right away, I started working at an Inn as a chef. It was a live-in situation.

Next door to the Inn was a low-income apartment building. I knew some of the people there and when I passed the building some of my old acquaintances were drinking beer on the front steps. I wasn’t going to go over to see them.

Then I saw her. Her hair was reddish brown, full like a lion’s mane. I could see her eyes from the street. They were like giant dark haunted holes in her face and they pulled me right across the lawn of the building. I was talking to my old buddies but I couldn’t get my eyes off her.

“Hey, I’m Dean,” I said and held out my hand to shake hers.

“Sascha,” was all she said as she gripped my

hand.

Her hand was dwarfed in mine but she had the strong shake of a working man. We talked for a while. When I mentioned prison her eyes got real big. I don’t know. I never saw eyes that big in my life before. When I was younger there was a set of paintings that were popular and all the people and animals in them were all eyes that you could fall into. Maybe God saw those pictures and made Sascha.

At first she wouldn’t go out with me. Every time I saw her I would ask her out. She would always have some excuse. She was staying with the people I knew in the building. I noticed that she slept in her car sometimes. She asked me for money twice. I said no. I figured that if she wouldn’t go out with me, why should I let her use me for the money?

Finally one night she was hanging out on the front steps and she asked me if I had five dollars.

“No, but I have a tab at the bar in the Inn,” was what I said. “Do you want to have a few drinks with me?”

She thought for a long minute.

“Yes,” she said. “I guess I could use a drink.”

I don’t think she wanted particularly to drink with me. She just wanted to drink. That was okay by me. I didn’t particularly want to drink. I just wanted to be with her.

We closed the bar and went back to my room. She never left.

A lot of things happened over the next four years. We got married. We moved into the city and were working two jobs.

At one job, we were mental health workers in a psychiatric hospital. I worked the acute admissions ward. Sascha worked with the chronics. We worked the graveyard shift and after getting out of work we went to a horse farm and grained and watered the horses and walked them. Sascha would groom the horses. She grew up on a horse farm and could even break horses. She used to talk about it all the time. After work, we would go to a bar and drink ’til about noon. Then we would go home and sleep.

We would argue sometimes. I had started shooting heroin again and soon I would leave her at the bar while I went off with some people to get the stuff. When I came back, she would have some guy or another hanging around her. Sometimes I would fight with them.

GOLDFINGER continued on next page

tales from the curb

The Myth Exposed Part 2



James Shearer
Spare Change News

Boston likes to think of itself as a liberal city. As a matter of fact, Massachusetts as a whole loves to think of itself as a liberal state.

We take great pride in it. We beat our chests about it, and always vote democrat. We make up our own rules and generally thumb our noses at the rest of the country who see us as a bunch of left wing zealots. But hey, we were the first state to allow gay marriage. Take that America.

So why is the headline of this weeks column called the myth exposed you ask? The it the headline because this whole liberal state thing is just that, a myth. Case and point, on my way to work last week I was reading a article in the Metro (yes I read it) about how the anti-graffiti campaign fight was going. Truth be told I haven’t seen a lot of graffiti in the last few years, not anything new anyway. Fact is tagging on private or even public property can get you a hefty fine, or even put in jail. This whole uproar or war against graffiti started a long time ago, when a few citizens got their knickers in a bunch when graffiti artists began to tag private property.

While I don’t condone the profanity-laced stuff or tagging headstones, couldn’t there be a better way to solve this problem than throwing people in jail. How about a taggers park where artists can tag to their hearts content? After all isn’t graffiti art? A form of self-expression? Besides I happened to like the Andre the Giant tags, and if we are so liberal, wouldn’t we be ok with a taggers park?

But no, some of us are just a bunch of stuffed shirts when it comes to self-expression. Some of those stuffed shirts are the Graffiti NABBERS organization based in the Back Bay, whose chairperson Anne Swanson would be just all aglow if no one ever tagged in Boston ever again.

I guess I shouldn’t really be shocked by this. Some Back Bay folk seem to be a little stuffy when it comes to their neighborhood, and more than a little full of themselves. Just one walk down Newbury Street and you’d be hard pressed to think of Boston as a liberal city. This was also the street that still really doesn’t want SCN vendors there.

So tell me Ms Swanson, what did the graffiti artists of America, and Shepard Fairey in particular, ever do to you or your NABBERS? For those of you who don’t know, Fairey was the artist who did the Obama hope sign. He also is the person who did the images of Andre The Giant, which he was sued for. Our friend Ms Swanson is very proud of the fact that her group was the first to stand against Fairey and his renderings. REALLY? Proud of the fact that you shut down someone’s right to self-expression. Sounds like a load of you know what to me. So I guess we’re not so liberal after all. Self-Expression is a right, not a crime. What’s next, taking away a journalist’s right to his or her own opinion. That’s a form of self-expression too,

CUNNINGHAM *continued from page 3*

Throughout the network of individuals and organizations across Boston working towards the common goal of ending homelessness, there are a wide variety of opinions towards the House 1 proposal and its reformed approach to housing the homeless. While some, like Bourquin and Turley feel that the methodology of the proposal is inherently flawed, other major organizations in Boston support the proposal.

Denise Durham Williams is in her third year as the Executive director of One Family Inc. in Boston, a non-profit organization started twelve years ago with the central mission of ending homelessness.

“One Family is in support of the proposal. We recognize that there are some areas that could be improved. Our role is to ensure that we bring those in support of the proposal into the discussion to work on recommendations for how this can be improved as we get into the next phase,” said Williams.

Williams and One Family Inc. feel improvements can be made by allowing

more regional flexibility on the housing assistance cap set in the budget proposal.

One element of the proposal One Family Inc. strongly supports is the Home Base program. Home Base is a new program that aims to provide temporary housing accommodations for families with nowhere to go. Emily Cohen serves as the associate director of policy and advocacy at One Family.

“Home Base will create a flexible housing resource for families who are homeless or about to be homeless. It is a housing alternative and is an option for families rather than motels or shelters. It is fiscally responsible and a better option for families” said Cohen.

The Interagency Council on Housing on Homelessness and Housing plays a very influential role on issues of homelessness in Boston. The council sits within the Lieutenant governor’s office and was formed by an executive order early on in Deval Patrick’s time in office. The council is comprised of the heads of 14 agencies, all of which in some way deal with homelessness. Liz Curtis Rogers is the executive director of the coun-

cil, and believes that the new reformed approach outlined in the new budget proposal is the ideal path towards the ultimate goal of ending homelessness.

“The council has been charged with implementing the commonwealth’s five year strategic plan to ending homelessness. We have been working for several years to pilot the best processes to do so,” said Curtis Rogers.

“Experiences have shown us that it is more effective to provide housing based solutions rather than relying fully on shelters. We know that we need to maintain a shelter safety net for emergency cases, but what we also know is that most families need housing. In the governor’s budget we are looking to provide more resources and provide families with options besides shelters.”

Rogers understands that many people and organizations are concerned about certain aspects of the proposal, particularly the narrow categorization of people eligible for emergency assistance.

“Yes, shelter has been prioritized for certain family’s situations. We based our analysis on our current case load,

and tried to determine which families are going to be the most difficult to house immediately. About 60% of the current case load will now be targeted for the Home Base housing assistance program,” said Curtis Rogers.

Rogers believes the Home base will now serve as the much needed safety net for families with nowhere to stay.

“That program will provide a housing safety net for families with nowhere to go on a particular night- Home Base will provide temporary housing accommodations. We will ensure that children have a safe place. No children will be forced to stay in a car or on the street. We are very committed to providing housing and making sure families are safe.”

Requests for comment from Patrick’s office went unreturned. However, in his budget message posted on his the administration website, the governor states: “There are many difficult changes we were forced to make to balance this budget. But in the long run, these choices allow us to be responsible to future generations.”

GOLDFINGER *from previous page*

One time there was this guy who started giving me a hard time when I told him to keep away from her and we started to fight. I wasn’t doing too well. The punches made noise in my ears and I could feel the vibrations. The punches were coming at me one after another and I was waiting for an opening so I could take him down. I don’t know how many times he hit me but I knew if I couldn’t start hitting soon that I would be in trouble.

That was when I heard the crack and the glass breaking. Suddenly I wasn’t being hit anymore and it took a couple of seconds for my eyes to focus. He was

on the floor. Sascha was standing there with a broken beer bottle in her hand and her eyes were full of tears.

“I hit him. He was beating you up like my father always beat my mom. No one will ever do that to someone I love again,” she said.

I looked down at the guy on the floor. He was still breathing but he didn’t look too good.

“We better go,” was what I said. And we left.

I kept watching Sascha as we drove home. She watched the road.

“I love no one but you.” I said to her. She put her big eyes on me and smiled.

“I know you do,” she said.

She kept getting sicker and sicker from all the drinking. I had almost stopped going to the bars because I was shooting heroin every day now. I was worried about Sascha because of the drinking, so I asked her if she wanted to try a shot. She yelled at me and told me never to let her take a shot.

I knew that the drinking was going to kill her. She was losing weight. She started missing days at work.

Sascha was drunk and depressed when I came home with a bundle of dope. She went to sleep after she threw up and I shot two bags and nodded out. When I woke up she was opening another beer. I asked her if she wanted

a shot.

“Okay. Just don’t hurt me,” she said.

I tied her off and gave some. She smiled at me and the pupils on her giant eyes became like pin-points.

“Make love to me now,” she said. “Okay. I want to shoot a bag first.”

“Can I have a little more?” she asked. (To be continued)

Marc D. Goldfinger is a formerly homeless vendor who is now housed. He can be reached at junkietroll@yahoo.com Marc also has books on www.smashwords.net that can be downloaded for \$2.99.



Comments,
Questions,
Story Ideas?

Send a letter to the editor
editors@sparechangenews.net

Living Beyond the Class System in America

Jacques Fleury
Spare Change News



My name is Jacques, a.k.a. “The Haitian Firefly” in artistic circles. I am a poet, author, columnist, novelist and essayist. I came up with the nickname “The Haitian Firefly” to reflect my bold individuality

and life credo that we are all essentially fireflies, we glow but only for a short amount of time, so we might as well shine as brightly as we possibly can while we still can. I grew up in Port-au-Prince, Haiti as part of a middle class family. My father was an entrepreneur, Tailor and Landlord with his own business in Port-au-Prince, Haiti’s capitol city and my mother was also a landlord in Carfou, a rural part of Port-au-Prince.

My mother and father lived in separate houses. My mother lived with her four sisters in a house they had inherited after their parents passed away. My grandfather was an educated professional man who took great care of his family. I lived in Carfou, an outskirt of Port-au-Prince on Jean Claude Duvalier Avenue. Even though my mother and her sisters were all educated, they still could not easily find work; that is unless they were willing to compromise themselves sexually. Eventually, they all married money. Their husbands were professional men who could provide for them and afford them the luxury of living above the poverty line, the often precarious life of the middle class in Haiti. I say “precarious” because the scale could tip below our favor at anytime, which is exactly what eventually happened which caused us — my mother, stepfather and me — to essentially leave Haiti forever. We lived in a two-story house with a pool in the back with high surrounding walls with rooms to spare. So mother rented out the extra rooms to tenants, so she was bestowed the tile housewife/Landlord, a rarity for a woman in Haiti.

I remember at the cusp of my adolescent years when I first realized my “position” in society. I remember particularly one of my mother’s tenants; which made me see clearly that I was lucky to have what I had. She was a single mother with five hungry mouths to feed. My mom would sometime forgo her rent or feed her and her kids during particularly arduous times. I remember her kids sometimes studying on empty stomachs while I knit picked about what kinds of foods I liked and didn’t like, and how my mother would order the maid to cook me something else if I did not care for what was in front of me. I remember some of the tenant’s kids scaring me into giving them my dinners by telling me that if I

did not forfeit my dinner that the Ogoon (a Haitian voodoo king) would come and steal my soul while I slept. A trick I succumbed to for quite some time until my cousin Ti Bob convinced me to retaliate and refuse to fork over my meals.

I felt very privileged when I saw the tenant’s kids attending public schools while I attended a very exclusive private school “Frere Andre,” adjacent to the Haitian White House. Back in the late seventies and early eighties, we were the first to possess a telephone, refrigerator and color TV, things that we all take for granted here in America. My stepfather would take my mom and me to the circus, the theatre, vacation spots like the “Tropicana” and “Le Lambi” and afford us a lifestyle of fancy foods, furnishings and leisure. However, being “privileged” came with a price.

My mom married an alcoholic mechanic with his own business who, while providing us with luxury, also inflicted upon us some grave fatalities. He was terribly jealous and possessive. My mom was not allowed to come and go as she pleased. She would often have to be home before my stepfather, if she came afterwards, he would drink and erupt into a verbal and physical confrontation — which caused us to run for our lives sometimes into the wee hours of the night. Sometimes I would get physically hurt when I tried to separate them.

When my mother, stepfather and I landed in the land of the free with the Statue of Liberty to welcome us, neither of us knew what laid ahead for us in the U.S. of A. My mom told me just before we left Haiti that my stepfather’s business was failing and that our “status” would take a serious nose-dive unless we left immediately, while we were still on top. When we came to Boston, we all had to live in a rooming house in a windowless basement. I was only thirteen years old and found myself going to school wearing a multitude of motley colored clothes that would later be defined as “the immigrant look.” I found out about how comfortable other kids were living when I would go over their houses, which made me yearn for the middle class life I used to live back home.

One day, I came home crying telling my mom, between the emotional heaving of my chest from anguish, how the kids are teasing me for looking poor and that I was being called a “just come” — a term that I would later learn is reserved for people just off the boat, but in our case the plane — who does not dress properly and who would do almost anything for a living for at half the cost Americans would. They were accusing immigrants of stealing American jobs. My mom was patient, empathetic and loving, a trait that has been consistent from her right from the day I was born. She told

me to remember who I was before I came to America and not to let anyone define who I am.

As I became acculturated to living in America, I became more and more aware of how I was perceived and treated based on a number of factors. I am often perceived to be African American; that is until I open my mouth and my persistent accent gives it away that I’m not from here. When I am perceived to be African American, certain stereotypes often go along with that; for example, that I like rap music, live in the “Hood” and speak improper English. Sure, I grew up partly in the ghetto, but the axiom “I maybe from the ghetto but I’m not of the ghetto” is more applicable to who I am.

Another factor that I found out could be used against me is that I am Haitian. The first thing they assume is that I must have grown up terribly impoverished, and then they assume that I must be their intellectual inferior since I speak English with an accent — and both of these ideologies are far from the truth. I did not grow up poor and I also graduated Phi Theta Kappa Honor Society from college. The stereotype that Haiti is an impoverished country is true since Haiti is deemed the poorest country in the Western Hemisphere. However, what some Americans don’t know is that Haiti is also the First Black Republic, the first free Black nation in the world — right after America gained independence from the British. They also don’t know that Haiti boasts La Citadelle Laferiere; which is among the most famous National Historical sites of the world built under Haitian Emperor Henri Christophe. The stereotypes that I lived in poverty upon my coming to America and that I come from the ghetto neighborhoods of Boston are true; however, that doesn’t mean they stayed true. Today, I live in Cambridge within a working class to middle class community in my own apartment. I find that communication is the only factor standing between stereotypes and the truth, something people often neglect to do because perpetrating mal-adroit stereotypes are easier than challenging lifelong misconceptions and prejudices. My worst fear is that when people see me all they’ll see is a big Black guy probably from the hood, undereducated, angry and potentially a menace to society; none of which is who I am.

To Be Continued...

Jacques Fleury’s book: “Sparks in the Dark: A Lighter Shade of Blue, A Poetic Memoir” about life in Haiti & America was featured in the Boston Globe. Sample or buy the book at: [HYPERLINK “http://www.lulu.com” www.lulu.com](http://www.lulu.com). 20% of proceeds will go to Haiti charity Partners in Health. For personal appearances or comments contact Jacques at: haitianfirefly@gmail.com.

When my mother, stepfather and I landed in the land of the free with the Statue of Liberty to welcome us, neither of us knew what laid ahead for us in the U.S. of A.

Canada's First Women's Street Soccer Team Has Worldly Aspirations

Kevin Hollett
Megaphone (Canada)

Last September, a local soccer team made up of homeless and previously homeless men played their way to Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. It was the prototypical underdog story: their participation in the 2010 Homeless World Cup was the culmination of many months of work creating a soccer program where there wasn't one before, and recruiting and training players to get to the level required for international competition. Inspired by their example, Canada created the first women's-only street soccer team.

"Rio was an amazing experience for everyone involved," says Sarah Blyth, one of the organizers and volunteers behind Portland FC, a street soccer team in Vancouver whose players partly made up the national squad.

Since then, the street soccer movement has grown in the city. The excitement behind the team's participation has led to more players, more teams and more games. Practices that were once held weekly have doubled, as coaches and players now meet every Thursday and Sunday. There is a palpable excitement in the practices, and the players who participated in Rio are happy to mentor newcomers.

However, for Blyth and Kailin See-both support staff at New Fountain Shelter where the Portland FC team originated-there was a huge gap in who they were reaching and supporting with the street soccer program.

"There were no women from Vancouver playing in Brazil," says See. "When we saw what teams from other countries were doing with their women's street soccer program, we were inspired to bring that home."

And so they started recruiting, canvassing the various women's centres and shelters in the Downtown Eastside to try to get players out to practices. A key part of the recruitment process was understanding that in order to get women interested in participating, they needed to offer something different from the men.

"We'd had a few women come out to practice [before], but they rarely seemed to become regulars like the men," says Blyth. "Life is hard on the streets for everyone, but in many ways women have their own set of challenges and needs that are unique from men. Part of



Portland Phoenix, Canada's first women's-only street soccer team.

what we're doing is trying to meet those needs."

That has meant focusing on the social aspect of the game, providing a supportive community, a safe haven and food and drinks for every practice. They also separate the men's and women's teams during practices and have a female-only coaching staff so that new players are more comfortable and less overwhelmed.

And it's been working. On the day I attend their practice, there are a dozen players and volunteers on the women's side of the gym. They practice and laugh with each other genially.

One player named Erin had been participating for a little over a month. She sits on the bench beside me, and proudly laces up a pair of new Puma indoor trainers, shoes she says were donated to the team. She then rushes off to join her teammates in drills.

While the men engage in loud and robust drills (their thunderous kicks sound throughout the entire space), the women go about their practice more quietly. There was a clear focus on instruction and mechanics, like simple drills on passing and receiving a pass. Many of the players here have never really played soccer before, or even participated in organized sports. As a result, the atmosphere is intentionally positive and supportive, and the volunteers spend a lot of time on one-on-one instruction.

"We're trying to break the game down to its simplest of forms so that everyone can succeed," explains Simone Aardema, who has volunteered as a coach since the beginning of the New Year. "It's important to get the basics down. We focus in on the positive,

because sometimes this game can be very challenging.

"In a very short period of time, I've seen incredible improvement, especially in the ones that are absolute beginners."

It's an approach that Paula Armstrong certainly appreciates. At 54 years old, she is older than most of the other players. But she is bubbly and exuberant, clearly excited to be playing regularly. Armstrong, a resident at the Rainier Hotel, spoke about how she'd quit crack and has now been sober for over six months, and the role soccer has played in her recovery.

"It's the activity and the camaraderie," she says. "I wouldn't be able to motivate myself on my own, but with these other women, there's a support group."

"When you're trying to change your life, something like this really helps. It helps you focus your mind and your body, and keep positive. And it's led to these great relationships."

Armstrong races off to the far end of the gym to practice on her own after the other players have left. She says she's tired from the scrimmage and drills, yet continues to kick the ball into an open net long after most others have left.

The women's team now has a name separate from the men's-the Portland Phoenix-and new red and black jerseys to go with it. For See, the name has special meaning to the women, and captures the inspiration she herself felt from watching the other women's squads in Brazil. "It's about redemption, about rising up again," she says.

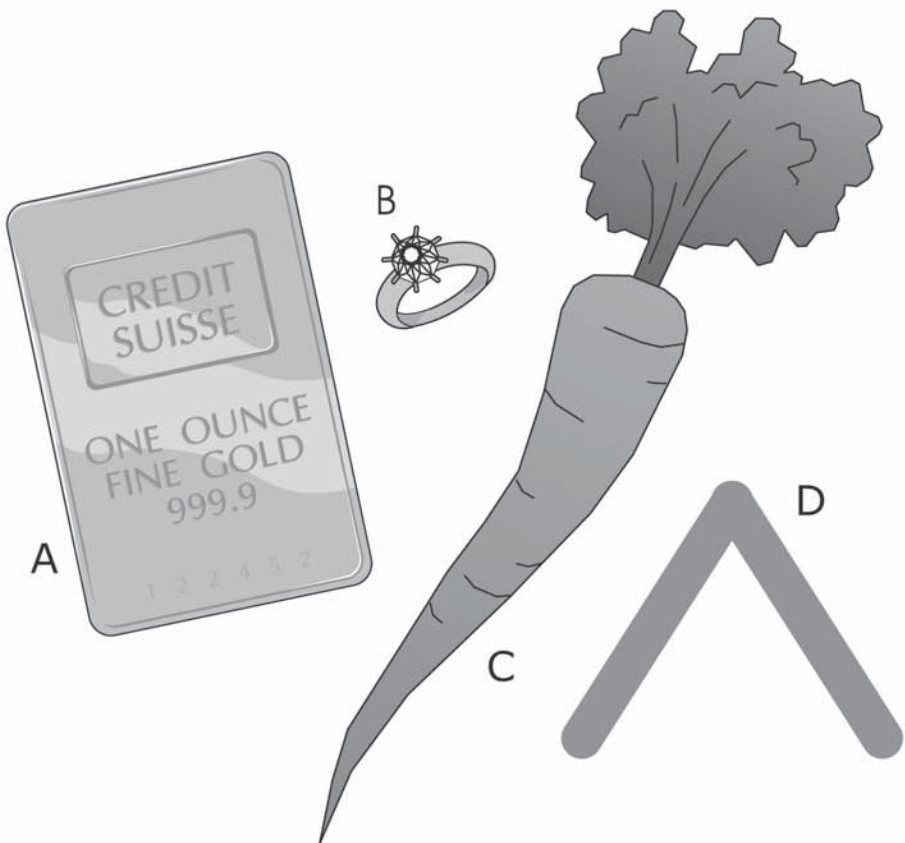
And with their new name and new uniforms, they also have a specific goal in mind-to play in the Homeless World Cup in Paris later this year. For these women, soccer is a kick start to dreaming big.

*Originally published by Megaphone ©
www.streetnewsservice.org*

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Homophones

They each sound the same, but only one of them is edible. Match the names to their respective images.



Carat ___ Caret ___ Carrot ___ Karat ___

Sudoku

		2		4		8		
4			3				1	
	3						6	4
			7			6	4	
1		7				9		5
	4	8			5			
9	1						2	
	2				3			8
		4		9		5		

Fill in the grid so that each row, column and 3x3 box contains every number from 1 to 9.

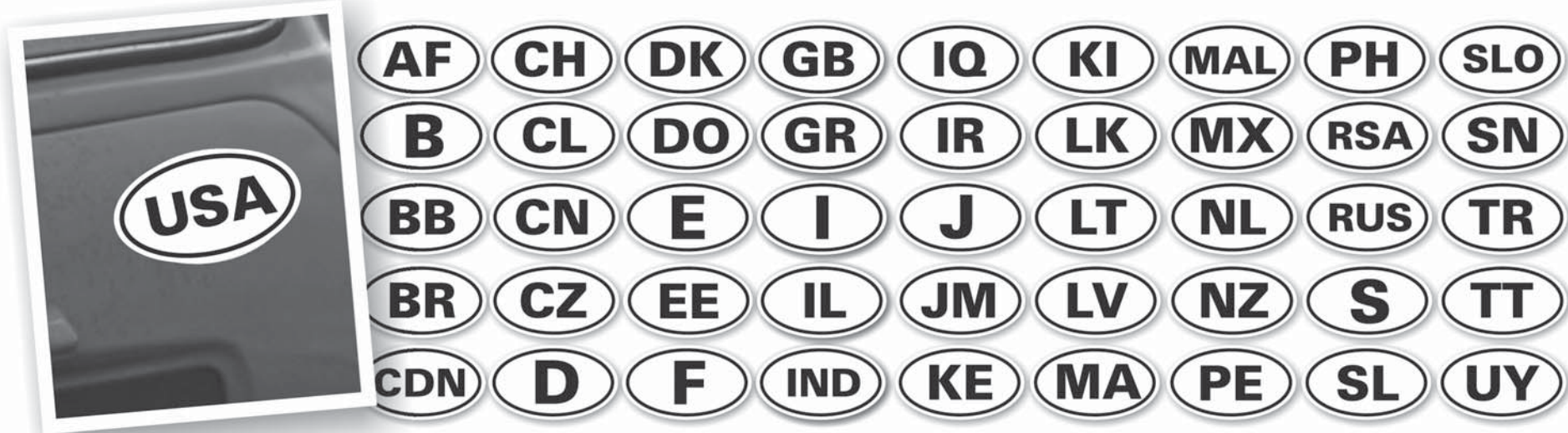
Digital Sequence

What’s the missing number?



Vehicular Vanity

Like the phrases “I ♥ NY” and “got milk?”, the oval decal has been used to describe everything from animal breeds to zodiac signs. But, it’s original intent can still be seen on some cars - displaying an affinity for a particular country. The one, two or three-letter code is not always easy to decipher. How many of these nations do you know?



Solutions to last issue’s puzzles

Ampersand &

Apostrophe `

Asperand @

Asterisk *

Backslash \

Bang !

Diagonal /

Eroteme ?

Hash #

Interrobang ?

Obelus ÷

Pilcrow ¶

Pound Sign #

Slash /

Virgule /

Kentucky

Massachusetts

Pennsylvania

Virginia

⌘

Alabama

Alaska

Arizona

Ohio

A Toothpaste

B Soap

C Petroleum Jelly

D Peanut Butter

E Mayonnaise

F Cola

G Baking Powder

H Chewing Gum

I Soy Milk

J Jello

8	1	6	7	5	9	3	4	2
3	9	5	8	4	2	1	7	6
4	7	2	3	6	1	5	9	8
7	6	4	2	1	5	9	8	3
1	2	8	9	3	7	6	5	4
5	3	9	4	8	6	2	1	7
2	4	7	1	9	3	8	6	5
6	8	1	5	2	4	7	3	9
9	5	3	6	7	8	4	2	1

Helping Hands

Cambridge and Boston are teeming with organizations ready to provide food and services to the homeless and the needy.If you're in need,they're there for you.If you can volunteer or donate,most of them could use your help.

Food

DAILY MEALS:

Boston Rescue Mission
39 Kingston ST., Boston
Community meals: 3pm weekdays, and 5pm Sundays (no Saturdays).
Pine Street Inn
444 Harrison Ave., Boston, 617-482-4944
Breakfast: 6 a.m.; brown bag lunches during the day; Dinner: 5 p.m.; Chicken truck: 11:30 a.m.
Rosie's Place (women & children only, no boys over age 11)
889 Harrison Ave., Boston, 617-442-9322
Lunch: 11:30 a.m. – 1 p.m.; Dinner: 4:30 p.m. – 7 p.m.
St. Francis House
39 Boylston St., Boston, 617-542-4211
Breakfast: 7:30 a.m. – 9 a.m.; Lunch: 11:30 a.m. – 1 p.m.
Emergency sandwiches: Weekdays 2:45 p.m. – 3 p.m.
Salvation Army 402 Mass. Ave., Cambridge, 617-547-3400
Lunch: 12 p.m.
Women's Lunch Place (women & children only, no boys over age 14, male presence discouraged)
67 Newbury St., Boston., 617-267-0200
Open Mon. – Sat., 7 a.m. – 2p.m.
www.womenslunchplace.org

WEEKLY MEALS

Monday:

Boston Rescue Mission
39 Kingston ST., Boston
Food pantry: 9-11am (except holidays). Bring proof of address.
Church of the Holy Resurrection
64 Harvard Ave., Allston, 617-787-7625
6 p.m. – 7 p.m. and take-out.
Mass. Ave. Baptist Church. 146 Hampshire St., Cambridge, 617-868-4853. 6 p.m. – 7:30 p.m.

Tuesday:
Church of the Advent
30 Brimmer St., Boston, 617-523-2377 6 p.m.
First Parish Unitarian Church
3 Church St., Cambridge, 617-876-7772
6 p.m. – 7 p.m. (doors open at 5:30 p.m.)
Faith Kitchen, Faith Lutheran Church
311 Broadway, Cambridge, 617-354-0414
6:30 p.m. (second & last Tuesday of every month)

Wednesday:
Salvation Army 402 Mass. Ave., Cambridge, 617-547-3400 5 p.m. – 6 p.m.

Thursday:
Christ Church, Zero Garden St. Cambridge, 617-876-0200 6 p.m. *St. James Church*
1991 Mass. Ave, Cambridge
The Women's Meal (Women and children welcome)
5 p.m. – 7 p.m. (food pantry 3 days/week)
Union Baptist Church
874 Main St., Cambridge, 617-864-6885. 5 p.m.

Friday:
Arlington St. Church
351 Boylston St., Boston, 617-536-7050 5 p.m.
Food Not Bombs
Boston Common (near Park St. T station), 617-522-8277 3 p.m. – 5 p.m.
Mass. Ave. Baptist Church. 146 Hampshire St., Cambridge, 617-868-4853 6 p.m. – 7:30 p.m.

Saturday:
Pilgrim Church 540 Columbia Rd, Dorchester
approx 8:45 (*Boston Commons, near fountain*)
We serve soup, pasta, coffee, juice, pastries, sandwiches, and clothing once a month.

12-1:30 pm
We offer a free community lunch, it is a cafe style, and we serve the guests, no standing in line. The meals are hot and made with love by our very talented chef

Sunday:
Food Not Bombs. 955 Mass Ave (617) 787-3436

Central Square Cambridge on Sundays from 3-5pm.

FOOD ASSISTANCE

Greater Boston Food Bank, 617-427-5200
Serves non-profit organizations such as agencies, shelters, etc.
Office hours: 8 a.m. -- 4:30 p.m.
Project Bread • 617-723-5000; Hotline 1-800-645-8333
Referrals to food pantries throughout the city
Somerville Food Pantry • 617-776-7687
Food pantry: Mon, Tue, Fri 10 a.m. -- 2 p.m.; Wed 12 p.m. -- 4 p.m.; Thu 1 p.m. -- 4 p.m.
Somerville residents only. Those unable to use other pantries due to disability may call and ask for the Project Soup Delivery Coordinator.

Brookline Food Pantry
15 St. Paul St., Brookline, 617-566-4953
Tues. & Thurs. 10 a.m. – 2 p.m., Sat. 2 p.m. – 4 p.m.
Brookline residents only. Second-time visitors must present a letter from an advocate confirming that they are in need of food services.
CEOC (Cambridge Economic Opportunity Commission)
11 Inman St. (basement), Cambridge, 617-868-2900
Food pantry: Mon, Wed 4 p.m. -- 6 p.m.; Tue 12 p.m. -- 2 p.m.; Thu 11 a.m. -- 1 p.m.; Closed Fri.
East End House
105 Spring St., Cambridge, 617-876-4444
Food pantry: Tue 9 a.m. -- 2 p.m.; Fri 9 a.m. -- 12 p.m.
Offers assistance in filling out food stamp applications (call for appointment).

Margaret Fuller Houses
71 Cherry St., Cambridge, 617-547-4680
Food pantry: Wed. 5 p.m. -- 7 p.m.; Thurs. 9 a.m. -- 12 p.m. & 6 p.m. -- 7:30 p.m.; Fri & Sat 9 a.m. – 12 p.m.
Pentecostal Tabernacle Church • 617-661-0222
Food pantry by appointment only; no deliveries or walk-ins; referrals to other food pantries
Salvation Army
402 Massachusetts Ave., Cambridge, 617-547-3400
Cambridge and Somerville residents only.
Food pantry: 9 a.m. – 3 p.m. & by appointment
St. Francis House
39 Boylston St., Boston, 617-542-4211
Food pantry: Mon. – Fri. 10 a.m. -- 11 a.m.
Sign up at the Counseling Desk in the St. Francis House Day Center
St. James Church
1191 Mass. Ave, Cambridge

Food pantry: Tues. 6 p.m. – 8 p.m.; Thurs. 11 a.m. - 12 p.m.; Sat. 10 a.m. – 12 p.m.
St. Paul's Ame Church
85 Bishop Allen Drive, Cambridge, 617-661-1110
Food pantry: Wed. 12 p.m. – 2 p.m.; Sat. 10 a.m. – 12 p.m.
Western Ave. Baptist Church
299 Western Ave.,Cambridge, 617-661-0433
Food pantry: Every second Wed., 10 a.m.
Zinberg Clinic Pantry at Cambridge Hospital 617-665-1606
For clinic patients with HIV / AIDS only.
Food pantry: Mon. -- Fri. 9 a.m. -- 5 p.m.
Fair Foods \$2 a bag;
CAMBRIDGE, St. Paul's Church
29 Mt. Auburn St
Harvard Sq. Red Line
Saturdays 10-11
SOMERVILLE, Cobble Hill Apts
84 Washington St. Back parking lot (near Sullivan Sq.)
Every other Wed. 11:30-1
Mt. Pleasant Apts. 70 Perkins St. (off Broadway)
Every other Wed. 1:30 - 2:30
Hearty Meals for All
Somerville Community Baptist Church
31 College Ave. Somerville, MA 02144
Free Community Meals the second Friday of every month at 6:30pm

Homeless Concerns

The Women's Center
46 Pleasant St., Cambridge, 617-354-8807
Computers, kitchen, space, children's room, and more.
Walk-ins welcome.

Women & children only (no boys over age 12)
Hours: Mon-Fri 10am-8pm, Sat 10am-3pm.

Cambridge Multi-Service Center
19 Brookline St., Cambridge, 617-349-6340
City-run agency with additional community non-profit partners. Works with Cambridge families in shelters, provides shelter referrals and other housing assistance. Employs housing specialists for elderly and disabled.
Office hours: Mon. 8:30 a.m. -- 8 p.m.; Tue., Wed., Thu. 8:30 a.m. -- 5 p.m.; Fri. 8:30 a.m. -- 12 p.m. Walk-ins accepted.
Cardinal Medeiros Center
25 Isabella St., Boston, 617-619-6960
Day center for homeless adults (50 years & older); mental health & nursing staff; help with housing searches.
Lunch served at 11:45 a.m.
Office hours: Mon. - Thu. 9 a.m. - 4 p.m.; Fri. 9 a.m. - 3 p.m.
Caspar
240 Albany St., Cambridge, 617-661-0600
Open 24 hrs / day; emergency shelter open 4:30 p.m. – 8 a.m.; Clients who leave in the morning may not return until 3 p.m.; Clients staying multiple nights must prove recent local residency.

CLASP (Community Legal Assistance Services Project)
19 Brookline St., Cambridge, 617-552-0623
Free legal clinic for Cambridge homeless at the Multi-Service Center every Tuesday at 8:30 a.m.
Ecclesia Ministries
67 Newbury Street, Boston. 617-552-0623
Weekly Schedule for the Common Cathedral:
Sunday
- Worship at Brewer's Fountain on Boston Common, 1 pm
- Gospel Reflection at St. Paul's Cathedral, 138 Tremont St., 2:30 p.m. -- 4 p.m.
Monday
- Lunch at Sproat Hall (St. Paul's Cathedral) 11:30 a.m. –1 p.m.
-Eucharist & Healing (St. Paul's Cathedral) 1 p.m.
- Common Fellowship in Sproat Hall (St. Paul's Cathedral) 2 p.m. –3 p.m.
Wednesday
- Common Art at the Emmanuel Church, 15 Newbury Street, 10 a.m. – 3 p.m.
Friday
- Common Cinema in Sproat Hall (St. Paul's Cathedral) 2:30 p.m. -- 5 p.m.

Horizons for Homeless Children
617-445-1480; www.horizonsforhomelesschildren.org
Horizons for Homeless Children is seeking volunteers to interact and play with children living in family, teen parent, and domestic violence shelters in Greater Boston. We offer daytime and evening shifts, so there is likely to be one that fits your schedule. A commitment of 2 hours a week for 6 months is required. The next training session will be Sat., Sept. 27, 9:30 a.m. -- 4:30 p.m.

Medical Walk-in Unit at Mass General Hospital
617-726-2707
Provides minor medical care for adults. Patients are seen in order of arrival. MGH accepts most insurances but requires copayments.
Hours: Mon.-Fri. 8:30 a.m.-8 p.m.; Sat., Sun., Holidays 9:30 a.m.-4 p.m.; closed Thanksgiving & Christmas
Boston Rescue Mission
39 Kingston ST., Boston
Safe & Healthy men's overnight shelter program.
Rosie's Place
889 Harrison Ave., Boston, 617-442-9322
Women and children only (no boys over age 11)
Open 7 days a week; provides help with housing, medical care, job training, financial aid and education, legal services, rape crisis counselors, health specialists, and more.
St. Francis House

39 Boylston Street, Boston, 617-542-4211
Meals offered 365 days / yr.; food pantry open weekdays. Offers a mailroom, open art studio, clothing lottery, computer library, support groups such as AA, showers, telephones, toothbrushes & razors, medical clinic, counseling & mental health services, housing counseling & stabilization services, & a women's center.
For more details on these services and for their specific times visit www.stfranchishouse.org
Starlight Ministries. 617-262-4567
Outreach van with food, clothing, blankets and worship
Hours: Wed. 8 p.m. by Park Street T station on the Boston Common.
Streetlight Outreach
Wednesdays at 8:00 PM
Harvard T-Station (The Pit); Porter Square T-Station
Volunteers work weekly to serve the homeless who live in Harvard and Porter Squares. Volunteer teams give away warm food and beverages, clothing and counsel to those in need. Streetlight volunteers also lead an outdoor worship service for the entire community.

The Women's Center
46 Pleasant St., Cambridge, 617-354-8807
Computers, kitchen and rooms. Walk-ins welcome.
Women & children only (no boys over age 16).
Hours: Mon-Fri 10 a.m.-- 8 p.m., Sat 10 a.m. – 3 p.m.
On The Rise
341 Broadway, Cambridge, 617-497-7968
Women only. Home-base during the day and advocacy services. Open six days / week. First-time visitors, call ahead or stop by Mon-Sat, 8-2pm.

The Outdoor Church of Cambridge
The Outdoor Church of Cambridge is an outdoor ministry to homeless men and women in Cambridge. Prayer services and pastoral assistance outdoors in all seasons and all weather. Short prayer services in Porter Square, under the mobile sculpture near the T station, at 9:00 AM and on the Cambridge Common, near the tall Civil War monument and directly across from Christ Church Cambridge on Garden Street, at 1:00 PM every Sunday, throughout the year. Sandwiches, pastry, juice and clean white socks available in Harvard Square and Central Square. (978)456-0047, 39 Brown Road, Harvard, Massachusetts 01451 jedmannis@charter.net; www.theoutdoorchurch.net.

Victory Programs, Inc.
www.vpi.org. Short and long-term residential substance use disorder treatment programs for individuals and families; affordable housing opportunities for eligible individuals; HIV / AIDS case management. Sites throughout Boston
Please call for more information. (617) 541-0222 ext. 626

Legal Aid:
Lawyers Clearinghouse, 617-723-0885
Shelter Legal Services (Newton), 617-965-0449

The Homeless Eyecare Network of Boston (HEN-Boston)
is a nonprofit organization dedicated to maintaining a constantly undated network of affordable and free eyecare services for the homeless. If you need an eye exam or glasses, please visit our website, www.hen-boston.org.

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